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Attorney Docket: PB 03 0006 (SPLG 003US1)
PATENT**Remarks**

Claims 1-33 are currently pending in this application. Claims 21, 22, and 28 have been amended herein. Claim 23 has been canceled herein. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-22 and 24-33 will be pending in this application. It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims define allowable subject matter.

With respect to the objection to the disclosure, paragraph [0038] of the specification has been amended to replace "EPSs 38 and 40" with "EFSs 38 and 40", as requested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant requests that the objection to the disclosure be withdrawn.

Turning to the prior art rejections, claims 1, 7, 10, and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,889,157 (Mutchler). Claims 15, 17-19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,681,351 (Kittross). Claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutchler in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,828,674 (Proskauer). Claims 4-6 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutchler in view of Kittross. Claims 13 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutchler in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,047,293 (Blitz). Claims 8 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mutchler in view of Kittross and Proskauer. Claims 16, 20, 23, 29, and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross in view of Proskauer. Claims 26, 27, 30, and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross in view of Blitz. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for reasons set forth hereafter.

Claim 1 recites a method for distributing software components to computer stations that analyze products, wherein the method comprises, among other things, obtaining a software component including information used by a computer station which communicates with a test station to analyze a product, and distributing the software component to the computer station.

Mutchler does not describe or suggest a method as recited in claim 1. For example, Mutchler does not describe or suggest distributing a software component to a computer station which communicates with a test station to analyze a product. Rather, Mutchler describes distributing a test suite directly to a unit under test (UUT) to test the UUT using the test suite.

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Mutchler describes a method of installing and configuring a test suite for a UUT in an automated assembly process. A user inputs an identifier into the UUT. The identifier, such as a serial number, corresponds to the UUT. The identifier is received by a test suite server 130 that retrieves a Bill of Materials of the UUT from an IT server 140. Test files and other files specific to the Bill of Materials are then generated by the test suite server 130 and copied to the UUT. The UUT is then tested using the test and other files, which constitute the test suite. Accordingly, Mutchler does not describe or suggest distributing a software component to a computer station which communicates with a test station to analyze a product. Rather, Mutchler describes distributing a software component (the test suite) directly to the product being tested (the UUT).

None of Kittross, Proskauer, and Blitz, considered alone or in combination, make up for the deficiencies of Mutchler with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 2-14 depend from independent claim 1. When the recitations of claims 2-14 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent claim 1, dependent claims 2-14 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 2-14 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

Claim 15 recites a management system database configured to be used with a computer station that operates an instrument when analyzing a product, wherein the database stores software components that are configured to be executed by the computer station to communicate with and operate the instrument in order to analyze the product, and the database automatically accesses the software components based on identification of at least one of the computer station, the instrument and the product.

Kittross does not describe or suggest a management system database as recited in claim 15. For example, Kittross does not describe or suggest a database that stores software components that are configured to be executed by a computer station to communicate with and operate an instrument in order to analyze a product, wherein the database automatically accesses

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the software components based on identification of at least one of the computer station, the instrument and the product.

Kittross describes techniques for programming an ATE system 20 with different test procedures 40 for testing different devices 46. The ATE system 20 includes a memory 22 having the test procedures 40 stored therein, a test interface 28 to connect to and test the devices 46, and a processor 26 coupled to the memory 22 for executing the test procedures 40 using the test interface 28. Each test procedure 40 includes a plurality of test elements 42, each of which defines instructions and programmable input variables that direct the processor 26 to perform a particular test operation. A user can create, or program, a test procedure 40 by copying actual groupings of instructions and variables that make up the test elements 42 from a test element database 36 of the memory 22 into a location of the memory 22 that stores the test procedures. In this arrangement, the test procedures 40 are essentially self-contained in that each test procedure 40 is stored with all of the instructions and variables necessary for directing the system 20 to perform the test procedure 40. Alternatively, the instructions and variables of the test elements 42 remain stored within the test element database 36 and a user creates test element references that point to where the instructions and variables are stored in the database 36. In this arrangement, at device testing time, the system 20 retrieves the instructions and variables for each test element 42 of the test procedure 40 based on the test element references.

Kittross is silent as to how the ATE system 20 selects or accesses which test procedure 40 is to be used to test a particular device 46. Rather, Kittross merely describes how each test procedure 40 is programmed and where portions or all of the test procedures 40 are stored within the system 20. Nowhere does Kittross describe or suggest a database that automatically accesses the test procedures 40 based on identification of at least one of the system 20, the test interface 28, and the device 46. Accordingly, Kittross does not describe or suggest a database that stores software components that are configured to be executed by a computer station to communicate with and operate an instrument in order to analyze a product, wherein the database automatically accesses the software components based on identification of at least one of the computer station, the instrument and the product, as recited in claim 1. On page 4 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Kittross discloses "how each particular test element or procedure has the appropriate specific information needed to perform a unique test, thus

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accessing the necessary software components when recognizing a particular product to be tested.” However, as described above, Kittross is silent as to how the ATE system 20 selects or accesses which test procedure 40 is to be used to test a particular device 46.

None of Mutchler, Proskauer, and Blitz, considered alone or in combination, make up for the deficiencies of Kittross with respect to claim 15. Accordingly, claim 15 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 16-20 depend from independent claim 15. When the recitations of claims 16-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent claim 15, dependent claims 16-20 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 16-20 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

Claim 21, as amended, recites a system comprising, among other things, a computer station configured to control operation of an instrument as the instrument analyzes a product, a test station communicating with the computer station and the instrument, and a management system database in communication with the computer station, wherein the database stores an equipment file set and the equipment file set includes a set of software components associated with the test station and independent of the product.

Neither Kittross nor Proskauer, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a system as recited in claim 21. For example, neither Kittross nor Proskauer, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a computer station configured to control operation of an instrument as the instrument analyzes a product, a test station communicating with the computer station and the instrument, and a management system database in communication with the computer station, wherein the database stores an equipment file set that includes a set of software components associated with the test station and independent of the product.

As admitted on page 17 of the outstanding Office Action, Kittross does not describe or suggest an “equipment file set including a set of software components associated with said test station and independent of said product.” Proskauer describes a test system that includes a PC workstation 2000, a tester 2002, and a semiconductor handler 2004. On page 17 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Proskauer describes “individual driver

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software (equipment file set) associated with handlers (instruments) used for operation in a particular workstation regardless of the product tested". However, the handler drivers are stored within the PC workstation 2000, rather than a management database in communication with the PC workstation 2000. Specifically, the handler drivers are stored within either a production interface 2008 of the PC workstation 2000 or a test development and execution program 2010 of the PC workstation 2000. Accordingly, Proskauer does not describe or suggest a management system database in communication with a computer station, wherein the database stores an equipment file set that includes a set of software components associated with a test station and independent of a product. Because Kittross and Proskauer each fail to describe or suggest one or more elements of claim 21, it follows that a combination of Kittross and Proskauer cannot describe or suggest such element(s).

Mutchler and Blitz, considered alone or in combination, fail to make up for the deficiencies of Kittross and Proskauer with respect to claim 21. Accordingly, claim 21 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 22 and 24-27 depend from independent claim 21. When the recitations of claims 22 and 24-27 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent claim 21, dependent claims 22 and 24-27 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 22 and 24-27 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

Claim 28 recites a system for developing software components, wherein the system comprises a test station communicating with a computer station, and a source code control system permitting a user to develop software components that, when used by the computer station, directs the computer station to control an instrument during analysis of a product, wherein the source code control system is used to develop a relation between an identification of the test station and an identification of the product.

Kittross does not describe or suggest a system as recited in claim 28. For example, Kittross does not describe or suggest a source code control system used to develop a relation between an identification of a test station and an identification of a product being analyzed. Rather, as discussed above, Kittross describes techniques for programming an ATE system 20

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with different test procedures 40 for testing different devices 46, but is silent as to how the ATE system 20 selects or accesses which test procedure 40 is to be used to test a particular device 46. Accordingly, Kittross does not describe or suggest a source code control system used to develop a relation between an identification of a test station and an identification of a product being analyzed.

None of Mutchler, Proskauer, and Blitz, considered alone or in combination, make up for the deficiencies of Kittross with respect to claim 28. Accordingly, claim 28 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 29-33 depend from independent claim 28. When the recitations of claims 29-33 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent claim 28, dependent claims 29-33 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent claims 29-33 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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